

Consultation for Running Buffalo Clover

Section 7 Consultation – The Endangered Species Act requires that all federal agencies consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service when any action that they authorize, fund, or carry out “may affect” a listed species (see back for determination definitions).

To determine if a project “may affect” running buffalo clover, consider the following:

- Does the project occur in Hamilton, Warren, Clermont, Brown, Adams, Scioto, or Lawrence County?
- Is suitable habitat for running buffalo clover available on-site? (see handouts describing habitat)

If the project occurs in one of the above counties and suitable habitat is available on-site, a survey for running buffalo clover should be conducted in May or June. A winter survey cannot conclusively determine presence or absence of running buffalo clover in Ohio. However, habitat surveys can occur in the winter months under certain conditions and with prior approval from the FWS. If suitable habitat is found, and the area cannot be avoided, additional surveys for plants should occur in the spring before any project related ground disturbance occurs.

When conducting consultation for running buffalo clover, the following information should be provided to the USFWS Ohio Field Office:

- location data including latitude and longitude of project area, site address, and county
- a topographic map with the project area identified
- a detailed project description, including layout of any new construction
- a detailed description of onsite habitat, including the size, type, and quality (habitat survey)
- photographs representative of all cover types on the site and encompassing views of the entire site
- running buffalo clover survey report (to be conducted in May or June if suitable habitat is onsite)

In the event that running buffalo clover is discovered, contact Sarena Selbo at the USFWS Ohio Field Office at 614-469-6923 x 17 or sarena_selbo@fws.gov. Please provide photographs and a detailed location description (include gps points in available). All potential new populations will be verified.

Determinations of Effects under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act

“No Effect”—appropriate when no species or suitable habitat will be impacted by the project. Does not require Section 7 consultation with Service.

“May affect”—appropriate when species or habitat exists and may be impacted by project. Requires concurrence of Service under Section 7. Federal action agency should consult with Service to determine appropriate avoidance/minimization measures, and to determine if formal consultation will be necessary. See specific “may affect” determinations below.

“May affect, not likely to adversely affect”—appropriate when species or habitat exists and may be impacted by project, BUT due to avoidance and minimization measures, impacts are beneficial, insignificant, or discountable, will not appreciably reduce the species’ ability to survive and reproduce, and will not ever reach the level that take of an individual occurs. Requires concurrence of Service under Section 7.

“May affect, likely to adversely affect”—appropriate when species or habitat exists and may be impacted by the project, and when take of a listed species is likely to occur. Requires formal consultation under Section 7. Informal consultation with Service should occur before this determination is made.